

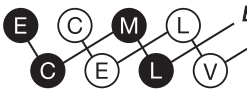


EMPOWERING LANGUAGE PROFESSIONALS
VALORISER LES PROFESSIONNELS EN LANGUES
SPRACHLEHRENDE IN IHRER ROLLE STÄRKEN



The European Language Portfolio A guide to the planning, implementation and evaluation of whole-school projects

David Little



European Centre for Modern Languages
Centre européen pour les langues vivantes
Europäisches Fremdsprachenzentrum



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A guide to the planning, implementation and evaluation of whole-school projects

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This publication is the result of a project of the European Centre for Modern Languages entitled “The European Language Portfolio in whole-school use” (ELP-WSU). Frequent reference is made in the text to the project/publication through its acronym ELP-WSU.

For further information and materials relating to this publication, visit the website <http://elp-wsu.ecml.at>.

Foreword

The ECML's second medium-term programme (2004-07) included two projects focused on the European Language Portfolio: Impel – ELP Implementation Support designed a website to support ELP implementation projects, and ELP-TT – Training Teachers to Use the European Language Portfolio developed a kit of ELP-related training materials, trialled the materials at a central workshop, and used them selectively at national training events in 17 ECML member states.

Whereas ELP-TT was chiefly concerned to support the introduction and use of the ELP by individual language teachers, the ELP in Whole-School Use project (ELP-WSU; 2008-11) was designed to focus on the next stage of successful ELP implementation, its use to support all second/foreign language (L2) learning and teaching in the school. This is not just a matter of increasing the scale of implementation. According to the “European Language Portfolio (ELP) – Principles and Guidelines” (Council of Europe 2011), the ELP is designed to support the development of learner autonomy, foster intercultural awareness, and promote plurilingualism. Whereas the first and to a limited degree the second of these objectives can be achieved by a single teacher working on his or her own, achieving the third objective is a matter for whole-school policy and practice.

ELP-WSU had five interacting aims:

- i. to identify existing whole-school projects;
- ii. to encourage and support the implementation of new whole-school projects in lower and upper secondary education (in the event, some primary schools were also involved);
- iii. to study the impact of such projects on schools, teachers and learners;
- iv. to develop guidelines for the design, implementation and management of whole-school ELP projects;
- v. to communicate project outcomes to decision makers.

The project team comprised David Little (Ireland; co-ordinator), Francis Goullier (France), Rosanna Margonis-Pasinetti (Switzerland), Rose Öhler (Austria), and Marnie Beaudoin (Canada; associate member). It met for the first time in May 2008 in order to arrive at a common understanding of the aims, scope, processes and intended results of the project and to plan the project workshop. A large part of the meeting was devoted to clarifying the term “whole-school use”: the use of the ELP to support all L2 learning in a particular institution.

The ELP-WSU workshop was held at the end of October 2008. It was aimed at language teachers and language teacher educators who were already closely familiar with the ELP and either involved in an existing whole-school ELP project or in a position to design and implement such a project as part of ELP-WSU. Including the

project team, the workshop was attended by 34 participants from the following 28 countries: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, “the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia” and the United Kingdom. The workshop had the following aims:

- i. To learn about whole-school ELP projects that workshop participants were already involved in.
- ii. To plan new whole-school projects.
- iii. To consider how best to track the progress of such projects, assess their impact on schools, teachers and learners, and identify the conditions that favour successful implementation.
- iv. To discuss the possible structure and content of a guide to the design, implementation, management and evaluation of whole-school ELP projects.
- v. To agree on a time frame and deadlines for reporting on projects.
- vi. To consider how best to use the project website.

The workshop achieved all these aims. In particular, the participants contributed much valuable information to the design of the project’s reporting template and the guide.

Participants in the workshop were invited to post on the ELP-WSU website interim reports on their ELP projects and/or contributions to the guide. The first submission date (30 April 2009) brought 13 preliminary reports on case studies, from Albania, Austria (two), Czech Republic, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Lithuania, Norway, Russian Federation, Spain and Sweden, and three expressions of interest in contributing to the guide, from France, Russian Federation and Spain.

Workshop participants who submitted either a contribution to the guide or an updated case study report were invited to attend the project’s network meeting in April 2010. In addition to the project team, 12 participants representing 11 countries attended the network meeting, which reviewed the case studies in progress, discussed the length and format of final reports, and considered the outline of the guide. In due course 10 case study reports were submitted, by Elvira Rodica Andronescu (Romania), Nida Burneikaitė (Lithuania), Zsuzsa Darabos (Hungary), Katerina Dvoráková (Czech Republic), Evangélia Gkiovousoglou-Kaga (Greece), Anita Nyberg (Norway), Rose Öhler (Austria), Elida Reçi (Albania), Elísabet Valtýsdóttir (Iceland) and Tatiana Yudina (Russian Federation). The ECML awarded certificates to all participating pupils, teachers and schools.

Chapter 1 of this guide briefly describes the ELP and the ethos it is intended to promote and explores some of the key issues that have to be addressed by any implementation project. Particular attention is paid to the concepts of learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and plurilingualism. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 deal respectively with planning,

implementing and evaluating whole-school ELP projects. Their structure follows the outline developed by the working groups at the ELP-WSU workshop in October 2008, and their content is informed by the various project reports that were posted to the ELP-WSU website in 2009 and 2010. Finally, Chapter 5 briefly considers what ELP-WSU can tell us about the impact, implementation and future prospects of the ELP.

1. The European Language Portfolio: intention and implementation

1.1 What is the European Language Portfolio and where did it come from?

The ELP was conceived as a companion piece to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR; Council of Europe 2001). The CEFR is a descriptive apparatus that defines second and foreign language (L2) learning outcomes in terms of language use. It thus adopts an “action-oriented” approach which focuses on what learners can do in their L2(s). The ELP is designed to mediate the CEFR’s approach to language learners. In 1991 an intergovernmental symposium recommended that the Council of Europe should develop the CEFR and the ELP (Council of Europe 1992); in 1997 the second draft of the CEFR (Council of Europe 1996) and a set of preliminary studies on the ELP (Council of Europe 1997) were presented at an intergovernmental conference; from 1998 to 2000 the Council of Europe’s Language Policy Division co-ordinated ELP pilot projects carried out in 15 member states and by three INGOs (Schärer 2000); and in 2001, the European Year of Languages, the ELP was launched together with the definitive version of the CEFR.

The ELP has three obligatory components:

- The language passport summarises the owner’s linguistic identity and his or her experience of learning and using L2s. It provides space for the owner periodically to record his or her self-assessment of overall L2 proficiency, usually against the CEFR’s self-assessment grid (Council of Europe 2001: 26-27).
- The language biography accompanies the ongoing processes of learning and using L2s and engaging with the cultures associated with them. Checklists of communicative tasks in the form of “I can” descriptors are used to identify learning goals and assess learning outcomes. The descriptors are scaled according to the proficiency levels of the CEFR (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2) and arranged by communicative activity (listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production, writing). The language biography also supports reflection on learning styles, strategies and intercultural experience.
- The dossier usually has an open form. It is where the owner collects evidence of his or her L2 proficiency and intercultural experience, and may also be used to store work in progress.

The ELP has two functions, pedagogical and reporting. It is designed to support the language learning process in a variety of ways, but it also documents that process, providing a cumulative record of learning achievement and the owner’s experience of using the L2s he or she knows.

The Council of Europe did not devise a single version of the ELP, or a limited number of versions aimed at different ages and stages of language learning. Instead, it defined the ELP's essential characteristics and functions in a set of Principles and Guidelines (Council of Europe 2011) and established a Validation Committee to determine whether ELPs submitted to it were in conformity with the Principles and Guidelines. By the end of 2010 there were 118 validated ELPs from 32 member states and five INGOs/international consortia. This high level of uptake was one of the factors that caused the Council of Europe to replace validation by registration from the beginning of 2011.

1.2 What is the educational ethos behind the ELP?

Founded in 1949, the Council of Europe first began to concern itself with language learning in 1960. It recognised that the successful implementation of its political agenda – the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law – depended on co-operation and exchange as well as respect for linguistic and cultural diversity, and that these in turn depended on more widespread and effective language learning. From a very early stage, the Council of Europe's work in language education focused not on language itself but on the interests, needs and motivations of the individual learner. It has always aimed to

make the process of language learning more *democratic* by providing the conceptual tools for the planning, construction and conduct of courses closely geared to the needs, motivations and characteristics of the learner and enabling him so far as possible to *steer and control his own progress*.

(Trim 1978: 1 ; emphasis added)

The learner-centredness of the Council of Europe's approach was confirmed and further strengthened in 1979 with the publication of Henri Holec's report *Autonomy and foreign language learning* (cited here as Holec 1981). Holec's report was strongly influenced by the Council of Europe's work in adult education, which itself was committed to learner-centredness and democratisation:

[Adult education] becomes an instrument for arousing an increasing sense of awareness and liberation in man, and, in some cases, an instrument for changing the environment itself. From the idea of man "product of his society", one moves to the idea of man "producer of his society".

(Janne 1977: 3; cit. Holec 1981: 1)

For Holec the concept of autonomy had consequences for the way in which learning is organised – he defined the autonomous learner as one who has "the ability to take charge of [his or her] learning" (Holec 1981: 3); but it also had consequences for the kind of knowledge that is acquired. If learners themselves determine the goals and content of learning, "objective, universal knowledge is ... replaced by subjective,

individual knowledge”: “the learner is no longer faced with an ‘independent’ reality ..., to which he cannot but give way, but with a reality which he himself constructs and dominates” (ibid.: 21). Holec’s organisational concerns were prompted by the need to respond to the challenges and potential of new technologies, and they stimulated a rapid growth of interest in self-instructional and self-access language learning. His epistemological insights, on the other hand, coincided with pedagogical developments informed by theories of learning in which language and communication play a central role. Supported by classroom research of various kinds, these theories argued that knowledge is constructed via collaborative processes that are driven by exploratory, interactive talk (for further discussion and references, see Little 2009a).

In the 1970s, the Council of Europe’s modern languages project group hoped to develop an approach to adult language learning, a so-called “unit/credit system”, that would gain acceptance across Europe. When this turned out not to be feasible, the project began to look for ways of focusing its activity directly on the learner; that was when the ideas underlying the ELP first began to take shape (see Little 2009b: 5).

The ELP Principles and Guidelines reaffirm the Council of Europe’s commitment to learner autonomy, but they also assign a central role to the development of intercultural awareness and plurilingualism. Perhaps the greatest challenge of ELP implementation is to find a way of holding these three aspirations in balance.

1.3 Implementing the ELP: three key issues

1.3.1 Learner autonomy

For Holec (1981: 3) learner autonomy depends on the ability “to take charge of one’s learning”. As noted above, this definition has often been associated with self-instructional and self-access learning schemes that require the individual learner to determine objectives, select learning materials and activities, and establish a learning schedule. But the organisational dimension of learner autonomy depends on a psychological dimension: a capacity for independent action presupposes a capacity for detachment, critical reflection and decision making (Little 1991). When we understand learner autonomy in this way it is clearly of central relevance to language learning at school: education systems increasingly want learners to master not only curriculum content but also the skills of learning.

In principle the ELP can support the development and exercise of learner autonomy in three ways. First, when the “I can” checklists of the language biography reflect the demands of the official curriculum, they can give shape and direction to the learning process by helping learners (and teachers) to plan, monitor and evaluate learning over a school year, a term, a month or a week. Secondly, the language biography is explicitly designed to associate goal setting and self-assessment with reflection on learning styles, strategies and other aspects of the learning process. And, thirdly, when the ELP

is presented (partly) in the learner's target language, it can help to promote the use of the target language as medium of learning and reflection. In other words, the ELP supports the operationalisation of three principles that Little (2007) has argued are fundamental to the development of language learner autonomy: learner involvement, learner reflection, and reflective as well as communicative target language use.

The three parts of the ELP play different though complementary roles in a classroom dynamic calculated to foster the development of learner autonomy. The language passport provides a focus for periodic stocktaking; the dossier gathers together work in progress from which the learner periodically selects samples that in his or her judgment demonstrate learning achievement; and mediating between passport and dossier, the language biography stimulates and supports the processes on which reflective learning depends. Learner self-assessment lies at the centre of these processes. It is clearly relevant at the end of each phase of learning, when the learner must decide whether or not he or she has achieved his or her goals. But it is equally relevant to goal setting, the effectiveness of which depends on a secure understanding of what has already been learnt, and to monitoring, which is a matter of assessing interim progress in relation to whatever goals have been set.

During the ELP pilot projects (1998-2000) the centrality of self-assessment gave rise to one general and three specific concerns. The general concern was that self-assessment is simply not possible because learners by definition lack the knowledge they need in order to assess themselves accurately. But this overlooks the fact that self-assessment of the kind we are concerned with in the ELP is referenced to behavioural criteria, the communicative tasks that learners can perform. Especially in the early stages, learners may not be able to gauge with any accuracy the extent to which they control (say) the inflectional morphology of their target language; but they are likely to know what they can do communicatively and with what general level of proficiency they can do it.

The three specific concerns to which self-assessment gave rise were: (i) learners do not know how to assess themselves; (ii) there is a danger that they will overestimate their proficiency; and (iii) they may be tempted to cheat by including in their ELPs material that is not their own. The first of these fears probably arose from the assumption that teaching and learning are one thing and assessment is another, so that ELP-based self-assessment should be something learners do on their own and apart from the learning process; while the second and third fears reflect the fact that in many educational contexts formal examinations determine learners' future options, which is taken to mean that learners themselves should have no part in judging their own performance. But if we assign the ELP and its various reflective activities a central role in learning, we shall gradually teach our learners the skills of self-assessment; as they become familiar with the descriptors and levels they will find it easier to form an accurate view of their developed capacities; and they will include in their ELP only material that is the product of or directly relevant to their learning. In other words, if ELP-based self-assessment is central to the language learning process, there is no reason why it should not be accurate, reliable and honest. However, in most education systems putting self-assessment at the centre of learning and teaching implies a pedagogical revolution.

ELP-based self-assessment is a variety of formative assessment; in other words, its purpose is to provide feedback that informs the next stage of learning. This is what the CEFR has to say about formative assessment:

The strength of formative assessment is that it aims to improve learning. The weakness of formative assessment is inherent in the metaphor of feedback. Feedback only works if the recipient is in a position (a) *to notice*, i.e. is attentive, motivated and familiar with the form in which the information is coming, (b) *to receive*, i.e. is not swamped with information, has a way of recording, organising and personalising it; (c) *to interpret*, i.e. has sufficient pre-knowledge and awareness to understand the point at issue, and not to take counterproductive action and (d) *to integrate* the information, i.e. has the time, orientation and relevant resources to reflect on, integrate and so remember the new information. This implies self-direction, which implies training towards self-direction, monitoring one's own learning, and developing ways of acting on feedback.

(Council of Europe 2001: 186; emphasis in original)

One way of describing the pedagogical function of the ELP is to say that it helps us to guard against the potential weakness of formative assessment. For the ELP helps L2 learners to notice the form in which they are receiving – and giving themselves – feedback, to organise, personalise and interpret it, and to integrate it into the ongoing business of planning and monitoring their learning. That is the very essence of learner autonomy.

1.3.2 Interculturality

According to the Principles and Guidelines, the ELP “reflects the Council of Europe’s concern with ... respect for diversity of cultures and ways of life” (Council of Europe 2011: 2) and is “a tool to promote plurilingualism and pluriculturalism” (ibid.: 3). The language passport “describes ... intercultural learning experiences” (ibid.: 6), while the language biography includes “information on linguistic, cultural and learning experiences gained in and outside formal educational contexts” (ibid.: 8). The close link between language and culture expressed in these phrases derives from the CEFR, which describes the cultural impact of language learning thus:

The learner of a second or foreign language and culture does not cease to be competent in his or her mother tongue and the associated culture. Nor is the new competence kept entirely separate from the old. The learner does not simply acquire two distinct, unrelated ways of acting and communicating. The language learner becomes *plurilingual* and develops *interculturality*. The linguistic and cultural competences in respect of each language are modified by knowledge of the other and contribute to intercultural awareness, skills and know-how. They enable the individual to develop an enriched, more complex personality and an enhanced capacity for further language learning and greater openness to new cultural experiences.

(Council of Europe 2001: 43; emphasis in original)

Intercultural competence is a feature of communicative proficiency at the CEFR's higher proficiency levels. For example, the self-assessment grid implies explicit awareness of the socio-pragmatic dimension of linguistic communication (see the descriptors for B2 and C1 reading, C1 and C2 spoken interaction; Council of Europe 2001: 27), and some familiarity with the linguistically mediated culture of the target language (see the descriptors for B2, C1 and C2 reading, C2 writing; *ibid.*). This intercultural implication is carried over into ELP checklists, which in some cases include a detailed focus on linguistically mediated culture. In most ELP models aimed at adult learners the language biography encourages the owner to write reflectively on intercultural experiences of various kinds, but usually without providing a specific focus. As for the dossier, the selection of documents for inclusion is the responsibility of the ELP owner and is an aspect of his or her self-assessment. The extent to which the selection explicitly seeks to illustrate the owner's intercultural competence is likely to depend on how salient interculturality is in his or her experience of learning and using L2s.

The CEFR argues that "intercultural skills and know-how" include :

- the ability to bring the culture of origin and the foreign culture into relation with each other;
- cultural sensitivity and the ability to identify and use a variety of strategies for contact with those from other cultures;
- the capacity to fulfil the role of cultural intermediary between one's own culture and the foreign culture and to deal effectively with intercultural misunderstanding and conflict situations;
- the ability to overcome stereotyped relationships (*ibid.*: 104-105).

To this one might add cultural awareness: personal engagement in understanding otherness. Clearly, language teaching that is attuned to interculturality will seek to develop each of these abilities by exploring similarities and differences between L1 and L2 cultures. Many cultural features are, of course, independent of language – for example, modes of social, political and domestic organisation, culture-specific sports and games, traditional food and drink. Other cultural features are linguistically bound in at least three different senses: they may be made of language, like broadcast and print media or works of literature; they may determine the ways in which language is used, like politeness conventions; or they may be part of the unconscious fabric of the language, like the involuntary gestures that accompany speech and in many cases seem to reflect the deepest cognitive structures of language. Cultural contact accounts for the fact that words travel between languages, while cultural difference explains why a particular word has different meanings in different languages. The ELP can facilitate reflection on these and other dimensions of interculturality, but the process is likely to be much richer if it embraces all the language learning that goes on within a particular educational institution. This is one of the potential benefits of whole-school ELP projects.

1.3.3 Plurilingualism

The CEFR has this to say about what it calls “the plurilingual approach”:

[It] emphasises the fact that as an individual person’s experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, from the language of the home to that of society at large and then to the languages of other peoples ..., he or she does not keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact.

(Council of Europe 2001: 4)

According to this definition, the individual’s plurilingual character is founded on his or her first language – “the language of the home”, which may or may not be the language of “society at large”. This sits uneasily with the fact that the CEFR’s descriptive apparatus is concerned exclusively with proficiency in L2s. However, the ELP captures the learner/user’s linguistic profile, including home language(s), and his or her proficiency in all the L2s he or she knows; and by reflecting on what he or she can do in the various languages he or she knows, he or she should become explicitly aware of his or her developing plurilingual repertoire, its potential and its limitations.

Different ELPs seek to accommodate the plurilingual dimension in different ways. Some use a single set of checklists for all L2s, which has the advantage of revealing the learner/user’s developing plurilingual profile at a glance. Other ELPs provide checklists in the different languages of the curriculum in order to support use of the target language for reflective as well as communicative purposes. Such models need to find other ways of capturing the learner/user’s plurilingual profile. But it seems likely that the CEFR’s “plurilingual approach” will be best served not by designing ELPs in a particular way but by using them as the basis for exploring the shape and nature of plurilingual profiles. This implies whole-school use of the ELP, but it also implies the creation of a new kind of space in the school timetable for a new kind of activity that embraces all the languages taught in the school, but also home languages that are different from the language of schooling and not part of the curriculum. Within this new space, individual and group projects could be pursued as a way of exploring interculturality as well as plurilingualism. Projects could involve cultural and/or linguistic comparisons and contrasts. For example:

- Do the languages represented in the class (home languages as well as languages taught at school) have the same, similar or divergent sets of kinship terms? What do those terms tell us about the organisation of family life in the past as well as the present?
- Can we work out some of the ways in which words are formed from other words in the different languages represented in the class? Which languages are similar and which are different as regards word formation?

- How can we use the various languages we know to facilitate communication among speakers of those languages? In other words, how many different mediation scenarios can we think of, and what particular challenges would they be likely to pose to the mediator?
- On the basis of the plurilingual profiles present in the group, how many polyglot conversations (in which different participants speak different languages without mediation) can we hold?

Further possibilities are discussed in Chapter 3 of the Council of Europe’s “Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education” (Beacco et al. 2010).

1.4 Towards whole-school ELP projects

The ELP can support the development of learner autonomy, and to a certain extent intercultural awareness, in a single classroom; whereas full justice can be done to the Council of Europe’s “plurilingual approach” only if the ELP is used to support the teaching and learning of all languages at all levels in the school and ways are found of taking into account languages that are spoken by some pupils but are not part of the curriculum. But this is not the only reason why ELP implementation to date has tended to favour learner autonomy over interculturality and plurilingualism. The ELP is a special case of portfolio learning that is underpinned by a particular kind of portfolio assessment: learner self-assessment. And it succeeds as a pedagogical tool to the extent that it enables learners to take control of their learning in the psychological sense defined in section 1.3.1 above.

Thus any ELP implementation project implies a commitment to learner autonomy as a precondition for successful development of the intercultural and plurilingual dimensions. This consideration should shape the planning, implementation and evaluation of whole-school ELP projects.

1.5 Overview of ELP-WSU projects

Final reports documenting ELP implementation beyond single classrooms were submitted by the following 10 ELP-WSU projects:

Albania (ELP-WSU participant: Elida Reçi)

- Sami Frasheri School, Tirana
- 1 621 pupils aged 15-18

- All pupils have Albanian as their home language
- Languages taught: Albanian (as language of schooling/school subject), English, French, German, Italian
- ELP model used: 96.2008
- Scope of the project: seven teachers, four languages (English, French, German, Italian), 827 pupils

Austria (ELP-WSU participant: Rose Öhler)

- Praxisschule der Kirchlichen Pädagogischen Hochschule Edith Stein and Katharina Lins Schule der Barmherzigen Schwestern in Zams (KLS)
- 108 pupils aged 10-14
- Most pupils have German as their home language. Other home languages in the school at the time of the project: Croatian, Czech, Romanian, Thai, Turkish (mostly one speaker each)
- Languages taught: German (as language of schooling/school subject), English, French, Italian
- ELP models used: 58.2004 (Austrian model for learners aged 10-15) and Austrian model for primary learners, not validated at the time of the project
- Scope of the project: all language teachers (seven) and all pupils (108) in the school, plus 32 learners and their two form teachers in an associated primary school

Czech Republic (ELP-WSU participant: Katerina Dvoráková)

- Zakladni skola Matice skolske, Ceske Budejovice
- 500 pupils (primary/lower secondary)
- Languages taught: Czech (as language of schooling/school subject), English, German
- Scope of the project: one teacher of English interviewed on her use of the ELP

Greece (Evangélia Gkiovousoglou-Kaga)

- All primary schools in the country (national project co-ordinated by Evangélia Gkiovousoglou-Kaga)
- All pupils aged 10-12 learning French and German (second foreign language)
- The majority of pupils have Greek as their home language; between 5% and 20% of pupils in each class are immigrants (home languages include Albanian, Russian, Polish, Bulgarian and Romanian)

- Languages taught: Greek (as language of schooling/school subject), English (first foreign language), French and German (second foreign languages)
- ELP model used: Greek model for primary learners (not validated at the time of the project)
- This national project was supported by in-service courses for teachers and the development of materials, and evaluated by questionnaire survey

Hungary (ELP-WSU participant: Zsuzsa Darabos)

- Lauder Javne School, Budapest, a school of the Jewish community with pupils from the beginning of kindergarten to the end of schooling
- 547 pupils (excluding kindergarten)
- Most pupils have Hungarian as their home language, some are bilingual, and some come from other countries (for example, the United Kingdom, Colombia, Turkey)
- Languages taught: Hungarian (as language of schooling/school subject), Hebrew (first foreign language), English (second foreign language; there is also an English bilingual programme), French, German, Italian, Spanish (third foreign languages)
- Versions of the ELP used: 15.2001 (Hungarian model for learners in secondary education); 105.2010 (Spanish online model for learners in secondary education)
- Scope of the project: five teachers, five languages (English, French, German, Italian, Spanish) and 70 pupils

Iceland (ELP-WSU participant: Elfsabet Valtýsdóttir)

- Fjölbrautaskóli Suðurlands School (FSu), an upper secondary school for pupils aged 16-20
- Approximately 1 000 pupils
- Almost all students have Icelandic as their home language
- Languages taught: Icelandic (as language of schooling/school subject), Danish, English, French, German, Spanish, occasionally Latin
- ELP model used: parts of 75.2006 (Icelandic model for learners in upper secondary education)
- Scope of the project: 18 teachers, five languages (Danish, English, French, German, Spanish) and approximately 600 pupils

Lithuania (ELP-WSU participant: Nida Burneikaitė)

- 10 schools and 11 teachers in primary schools around Lithuania (project coordinated by Nida Burneikaitė under the auspices of the Primary English Special Interest Group (PESIG) of the Lithuanian Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (LAKMA))
- About 90% of pupils have Lithuanian as their home language; other home languages include Polish and Russian, and especially in the Vilnius region many pupils are plurilingual
- ELP model used: there is no validated Lithuanian model for this age-group; the project designed and piloted various portfolio tasks for primary learners
- Scope of the project: 11 teachers (in 10 schools), one language (English), 250 pupils

Norway (ELP-WSU participant: Anita Nyberg)

- Kastellet School, Oslo – primary and lower secondary school (pupils aged 6-16)
- 610 pupils in the school
- Very few immigrant pupils compared with other schools in Oslo
- Languages taught: Norwegian (as language of schooling/school subject), English (first foreign language), German, Spanish, French (second foreign languages)
- ELP models used: 97.2008 (for learners aged 13-18) and 100.2009 (for learners aged 6-12)
- Scope of the project: all languages, language teachers and pupils in the school

Romania (ELP-WSU participant: Elvira Rodica Andronescu)

- National College Horea, Closca si Crisan, Alba Iulia, upper secondary school (pupils aged 15-18)
- 857 pupils in the school
- 98% of pupils have Romanian as their home language; 2% have Hungarian, Italian or Romani
- Languages taught: Romanian (as language of schooling), French, English, Italian (third foreign language); there is a bilingual programme in French
- ELP version used: 6.2000 (French model for learners aged 16+)
- Scope of the project: 15 teachers, four languages (French, English, Italian, Romanian), 215 pupils

Russian Federation (ELP-WSU participant: Tatiana Yudina)

- Lycée linguistique/secondary school specialising in languages, learners aged 13-17
- Total number of pupils: about 290
- An overwhelming majority of pupils have Russian as their home language, though they come from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds
- Languages taught: Russian (as language of schooling/school subject, except that the history of the literature and culture of the first foreign language are taught through that language); English, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Ukrainian, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic (all taught as first or second foreign language). All pupils learn two foreign languages and Latin
- Versions of the ELP used: 31.2002 (Russian model for learners aged 15+) and 3.2000 (Russian model for learners aged 11-14)
- Scope of the project: six languages (English, French, German, Ukrainian, Spanish, Italian), 10-15 teachers, 290 pupils

This overview of ELP-WSU projects reminds us of the very great linguistic and educational diversity across ECML member states. The detailed case studies from which these summary descriptions are drawn also show that familiarity with the ELP and its underpinning ethos remains very variable. This no doubt helps to explain why three of the 10 projects were not really concerned with whole-school use of the ELP in the fullest sense of the term. The scope of individual projects was determined by the professional function of ELP-WSU participants. Some eight of the 10 projects were carried out in single schools, one was a national pilot project (Greece), and one involved a national network supported by a teachers' association (Lithuania). The remaining chapters of this guide draw on the ELP-WSU projects to illustrate their argument.

For full details of the case studies see: <http://elp-wsu.ecml.at>

2. Planning whole-school ELP projects

The planning of whole-school ELP projects falls into two distinct phases. First, it is necessary to determine the scale and scope of the project and its duration, consider who proposed it and why, determine what “whole-school” means to those proposing the project, decide how the project will be co-ordinated, and identify what funding and other support will be necessary and/or available. Only when these matters are clarified is it possible to engage with the detail of the project and draw up an action plan.

The order in which we address the issues involved in planning an ELP project is not necessarily the order in which the different parts of the process will be dealt with in practice; and it is important to recognise from the outset that project planning is never a strictly linear process that moves steadily forward from one topic to the next. On the contrary, it usually involves a great deal of backtracking, adjustment and revision. Discussion of one issue may stall until another issue has been settled, when it may be necessary to revise decisions taken earlier in the planning process.

Nevertheless, planning is likely to be more effective if it is guided by a checklist of issues to be addressed and by some awareness of the possible impact of decisions in one area on other areas of the project.

2.1 Preliminaries

2.1.1 Scale, scope and duration

Some eight of the 10 ELP-WSU projects took place in individual schools, one involved a national network of primary schools working under the aegis of a national teachers’ association (Lithuania), and one was a national pilot project designed to introduce the ELP to teachers and learners of second foreign languages in primary schools (Greece). The 10 projects also varied in scope. Some were carried out in schools where teachers were already familiar with the ELP, so that collaborative whole-school use of the ELP seemed to be an obvious next step; others were launched in contexts where the ELP was still relatively unknown, so that the success of the project would be measured by the extent to which teachers of different languages adjusted their classroom practice to accommodate the ELP.

When determining the scale and scope of a project it is necessary to decide also on its duration. Most of the ELP-WSU projects were designed and implemented after the workshop held at the end of October 2008. Typically, the remainder of the school year 2008-09 was given over to planning, and projects were implemented and evaluated in 2009-10. At the end of the ELP-WSU reporting period, however, most project leaders intended to continue their projects in one way or another. When the length of a project is not predetermined by involvement in a larger project like ELP-WSU, it is probably

wise to think in terms of several years so that the project has every opportunity to make a lasting impact.

This means drawing up an overall action plan, dividing it into annual plans, and recognising that it may be necessary to make adjustments from year to year.

2.1.2 The importance of profiling

When determining the scale and scope of a project it is helpful to draw up a profile of the participating school(s): educational level and school type; number and age range of pupils; the home languages present in the school; the languages taught in the school (language of schooling, modern foreign and classical languages); the curricular status of the different foreign languages (first, second, etc.); the number of teachers for each language; and the total number of teachers in the school. At least some of this information is unlikely to be readily available to project planners until they collect it.

In addition to descriptive and statistical information, it is also useful at this preliminary stage to gather information that will be added to later in the planning process. For example, do all language teachers in the school share a common teaching approach, or do some emphasise the development of oral communication skills, for example, while others lay greater stress on mastery of grammatical forms? If there is variation of this kind, does it exist within languages or are communication skills, for example, emphasised in the teaching of language A, while grammatical accuracy dominates the teaching of language B?

2.1.3 Whose initiative?

The scale and scope of the project will depend partly on who proposes it. Of the two ELP-WSU projects carried out at national level, one was designed and managed by a government agency (Greece) and the other was an initiative of a national teachers' association (Lithuania). In either case participation by schools, teachers and learners had official or quasi-official support. Among the single-school projects, three were undertaken with official encouragement (Albania, Hungary, Romania), two were prompted by the school principal (Iceland, Norway), one was proposed by a university department and supported by the school administration (Russian Federation) and one was proposed by a teacher (Austria).

Projects that are proposed from the top down, by an official agency or by the school principal, have the advantage of official or quasi-official status from the outset, but this does not necessarily mean that teachers will welcome them and participate willingly.

On the other hand, when a project is proposed "from the bottom up", by a teacher or group of teachers, the participation of other teachers may be easier to secure but official support more difficult.

2.1.4 Motivation

The motivation for the project is likely to depend partly on who proposes it. In four of the countries participating in ELP-WSU, projects were a means of introducing the ELP at national or local level (respectively Greece and Lithuania, Albania and Romania); in four countries (Albania, Czech Republic, Hungary, Romania) the introduction of the ELP was associated with reform of curricula and/or school-leaving exams; and in three countries (Austria, Norway, Russian Federation) projects aimed to build on existing use of the ELP. Top-down initiatives may be motivated by considerations other than the language education goals that underpin the ELP. For example, the Czech school's primary motivation was to use portfolio learning to stimulate pedagogical innovation. By adopting a portfolio approach the school was able to secure additional funding, but its concept of portfolio work extended across the curriculum. This meant that when it came to ELP use, the dossier was strongly emphasised. Clearly, whatever the reason for proposing the project, it will have a decisive impact on its specific aims and the criteria by which its success or otherwise will be judged.

2.1.5 The meaning of “whole-school”?

ELP-WSU derived its rationale from the argument that the language education goals underlying the ELP can be fully realised only when the ELP is used not only to guide and support all L2 learning in a particular school but also to take account of languages that are present in the school but not part of the curriculum (for example, the home languages of pupils from migrant backgrounds). In Chapter 1 we elaborated on this in our discussion of those goals – the development of learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and plurilingualism. However, only some of the projects undertaken within the framework of ELP-WSU attempted to implement whole-school use of the ELP in this full and ambitious sense. In order to do so, all the language teachers in the school must already be familiar with the ELP and its intended functions, and the school must be committed to the principles that underlie Council of Europe language education policy. After a decade of ELP development, validation and implementation, there are still relatively few educational contexts of which this can be said.

A more usual situation is one in which several L2 teachers in a school are already familiar with the ELP in theory and/or practice and want to use it themselves but also to interest their colleagues in using it. Regardless of who proposes a whole-school ELP project in these circumstances, it is necessary to decide whether teacher participation will be voluntary or obligatory.

Common sense suggests that voluntary participation is more likely to bring success. If unwilling teachers are obliged to use the ELP, they will be tempted to do so perfunctorily; this may confuse learners and seriously disrupt the dynamic of the project.

If on the other hand they are allowed to remain outside the project and the project succeeds without them, they may change their minds and ask to join, especially if their pupils begin to ask why their lessons take no account of the ELP.

For some projects, then, whole-school use of the ELP is a matter of consolidating and extending existing practice, while for others it is at first a distant goal. Where a particular school is located on the continuum between no previous experience of using the ELP and several years of successful use inevitably plays a significant role in determining the specific aims of the project and its timelines.

There is another sense of “whole-school” that needs to be considered in this preliminary phase of planning: What is the intended relation between the project and the wider school community? Will teachers of other subjects merely be informed about the project, or will their active involvement be sought? For example, will teachers of (say) history and geography take account of the fact that (some of) their pupils are learning, or in the case of migrants already speak fluently, one or more languages that are spoken in countries dealt with in their courses? And when the project makes a presentation to the rest of the school, will teachers and other staff be encouraged to make use of whatever languages they know besides the language of schooling?

Increasingly, parents are considered part of the school community. It may in any case be a legal requirement that they are notified of new projects, and if a project includes the collection of research data, it may be necessary to secure their formal consent to their child’s participation. In addition, parents may have linguistic resources that the project can exploit in one way or another. Some may be fluent in one or more of the curriculum languages, and those from migrant backgrounds are likely to speak at least one language that is not taught at school. Can the project find ways of exploiting such resources? This is a question to which we shall return in the second part of this chapter.

Parents may also have a role to play in supporting their children’s learning outside school. In Lithuania, for example, the project group informed parents that a portfolio approach was a way of assessing their children’s progress and achievements and of developing their confidence, independence, responsibility and intercultural awareness. The group also decided to try to involve parents in portfolio activities, for example by helping their children with linguistic and intercultural assignments like “The languages of my family/relatives” or “The countries my family has visited”. Parents might also help their children by reviewing “I can” checklists at the end of a period of learning. This would show them what progress had been made and what targets had been achieved. One teacher asked her pupils’ parents to have a look at their child’s portfolio work (which is kept in the classroom) and write him or her some feedback.

The ELP can also play an important reporting role in home–school liaison, especially when it includes evidence of migrant students’ developing proficiency in the language of schooling.

It is also worth considering other ways of drawing parents into the project. The example of a Canadian project associated with ELP-WSU is instructive in this regard.

The project involved an elementary school with 136 pupils, 22% of whom had a home language other than English and 30% of whom were Aboriginal. “Whole school” was interpreted to mean pupils and staff but also parents and the wider community. Accordingly, one of the project’s aims was to increase parent engagement by enabling those whose first language was not English to contribute more fully to the life of the school. As they planned the project, staff identified a number of support tasks that they would like parent volunteers to perform. The tasks included: photocopying, laminating, helping to supervise field trips, managing bulletin boards, helping in the library, and helping individual pupils to practise their reading. The language needed to perform these and other tasks was correlated with the proficiency levels of the CEFR. Parents were encouraged to use the self-assessment grid from the CEFR to gauge their proficiency in English and then to decide which tasks they would be most comfortable performing by referring to the correlations with the CEFR levels. In order to make the scheme more user-friendly, task cards were developed containing key vocabulary. In this way the project generated significant added value as a means of involving parents in the activities of the school while helping them to develop their English language skills.

2.1.6 Project co-ordination

Whoever proposes the project and whatever its goals and specific aims, it will need to be co-ordinated on a day-to-day basis. The appointment of a co-ordinator should take account of the intended dynamic of the project since that will determine the extent of the workload. This will vary according to the size of school and the number of languages, teachers and pupils involved. But it will also depend on other features of the project. For example, if the project was proposed by an official agency and is supported by external funding, it will probably be necessary to submit regular reports, and formal evaluation may be required. Especially in schools where the ELP has not previously been used, the co-ordinator will be responsible for introducing it to his or her colleagues; whether or not professional development seminars are a regular part of school practice, they will be a necessary feature at least of project preparation.

During the implementation phase, co-ordination will require regular meetings of participating teachers, and these must be scheduled and a record kept of the decisions taken. Clearly, the co-ordination of an ELP project can quickly become a full-time job, which brings us to the issue of funding and other support.

2.1.7 Funding and other support

There seem to be three ways in which ELP projects can cost money. First, in some education systems it is usual for teachers who participate in an officially approved project to receive a salary supplement or some other benefit. Several ELP-WSU projects were carried out in such systems, but in the case of Iceland the funding support applied for was not granted. This meant that the Icelandic project lacked official status and teacher involvement was entirely voluntary. In other systems it is not usual for

teachers to be specially rewarded for participating in a project, which means that participation is likely to be voluntary in most cases. Secondly, school management may reallocate teaching resources so that the project co-ordinator manages the co-ordination process in exchange for fewer teaching hours. Making time for project meetings may also have indirect financial consequences of this kind. Several of the ELP-WSU projects reported that it was difficult to hold regular meetings, and participating teachers often depended on informal encounters in corridors and during breaks. In a small school where the teachers know one another well and have been using the ELP for several years, much can be achieved informally; but in a large school where the majority of participating teachers are unfamiliar with the ELP, the lack of regular formal meetings can be a serious obstacle to progress. Thirdly, projects inevitably incur at least marginal running costs. Even if they are not allocated their own budget, they are likely to require additional photocopying, and they may want to buy copies of the ELP for their pupils.

It is important to establish how much material support of this kind the project will receive before embarking on detailed planning.

Projects inevitably generate paperwork that needs to be stored in an accessible way. In an ideal world a project that aims to bring together all the language teachers in a school would be allocated its own room, or part of a room. Such an arrangement makes it possible for all participating teachers to have immediate access to project materials. A library of reference materials can also be built up, starting perhaps with the various guides and studies available from the Council of Europe and ECML websites.

If dedicated space cannot be made available to the project, some alternative solution may be possible. For example, the project may secure wall space in a corridor where it can set up a bulletin board and display area. In this way it gains visibility in the school and a ready means of communicating with the wider school community.

It is also necessary to secure a presence for the project on the school's website and to make arrangements for information to be regularly updated. If the school has an Intranet, much of the material that might otherwise be stored in hard copy can be stored and made available to teachers electronically: worksheets, report forms, checklists of various kinds, perhaps the ELP itself. Links can also be provided to the Council of Europe and ECML websites and the wealth of resources they provide. In schools where pupils have access to the Intranet, they can be included in the electronic communication that supports the project's developing dynamic and given direct access to some of the supporting materials.

At this preliminary stage it is worth considering how the project will bring the various languages present in the school into interaction with one another.

Towards the end of Chapter 2 we argued that the ELP's emphasis on plurilingualism implies the need for a new kind of curriculum (or timetable) space in which pupils can explore, compare and reflect on their plurilingual resources. A whole-school ELP project can begin to move in this direction by bringing together classes that are learning

different languages in the same timetable slot. It is not essential for those classes to be at the same grade level; indeed, it may be beneficial to bring learners of different ages and proficiency levels together. A whole-school ELP project may also feel entitled to make claims on the whole school. The Austrian ELP-WSU project, for example, organised an ELP funfair that brought together 28 learners in Year 5 and 28 learners in Year 8. The younger learners had recently begun to use the ELP, and the aim of the funfair, which lasted for half a day and required the co-operation of school management, was to introduce them to the checklists. They worked in pairs on listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production and writing tasks, then assessed themselves. The older learners, also working in pairs, acted as tutors and assessed the younger learners' performance, comparing the results of their assessment with the younger learners' self-assessment.¹

2.2 Developing an action plan

All the issues discussed in the first section of this chapter have implications for the specific aims of the project, which must be defined and then turned into an action plan. This process will be led by the project co-ordinator, but all participating teachers should contribute: involving them in the development of an action plan is an essential part of preparing them to participate in the project. But when some or all of the teachers are unfamiliar with the ELP it is necessary to begin this second phase of the planning process by providing them with information about the ELP, its structure, content and underlying goals.

2.2.1 Introducing teachers to the ELP

All ELP-WSU projects were co-ordinated by language professionals – teachers and/or teacher educators – who were already familiar with the ELP. Some of them were used to introducing the ELP to teachers, while others had at least received some form of training in its use. Although none of the teachers participating in the Icelandic project had used the ELP in its entirety, for example, some of them had attended training courses and experimented with selected parts of the ELP, and five had used portfolios at university. On this basis, the project leaders were able to organise three preparatory meetings to inform their colleagues. In the Hungarian project, teacher preparation was guided by a checklist of issues to be taken into account (available on the ELP-WSU website). In the Lithuanian project, teacher preparation drew on: the national curriculum guidelines for foreign languages at primary level; validated ELPs for young learners developed in France, Germany, Latvia, Norway, Poland, Spain and the United

1 A detailed account of the ELP funfair is available in German on the website of the Österreichisches SprachenKompetenzZentrum: www.oesz.at → ESP → das ESP im Unterricht → Unterrichtsvorschläge und Materialien → Anregungen für den Unterricht → 5.1.2 ESP day.

Kingdom, together with guides for teachers; hand-outs and worksheets produced by the project leader drawing on ELP-related materials available on the Council of Europe and ECML websites; materials shared by participants in ELP-WSU; and published EFL teaching materials that supported the development of portfolio tasks. In the Albanian project, teacher preparation had three focuses: the many different kinds of activity that foster learner autonomy, with a particular emphasis on creativity and imagination; classroom practice that recognises the value of plurilingual and intercultural experience; and the importance of integrating the ELP fully into the language learning process. The co-ordinator of the Norwegian project invited other teachers to come to her classroom and observe how she introduced the ELP to her pupils. She used the ELP logo to start a discussion about the meaning of communication and the importance of language learning, and at the end of the class pupils began to fill in their language passport, indicating which languages they were able to understand and speak. The Norwegian project also had access to a video made by the Goethe Institute in Oslo. It showed the ELP being used in a German class and included interviews with learners about working with the ELP. As these examples show, the preparation of teachers to participate in a whole-school ELP project will necessarily be shaped by local considerations, though use should always be made of the reference and training materials available on the Council of Europe and ECML websites.

The success of any whole-school ELP project will depend to a significant degree on the extent to which the participating teachers have a common understanding of the project's goals and how to achieve them. We have already referred to the possibility that the teachers in a particular school may have different beliefs about language learning and teaching and different approaches to their work in the classroom. The preparatory phase must seek to identify these differences and establish the common ground from which the project will be launched. ELP-WSU projects were very different from one another in this respect. For example, the Austrian project took place in a small school where the teachers knew one another well and shared the same action-oriented approach to teaching. They had already been using the ELP for several years, and their whole-school project was a way of consolidating existing practice. The Lithuanian project, on the other hand, involved teachers from 10 schools. It emphasised the role of self-assessment in effective ELP use, but had to allow a consensus gradually to emerge on the role of self-assessment in relation to other forms of assessment.

2.2.2 Defining project goals

The extent to which participating teachers are already familiar with the ELP will necessarily play a major role in determining the goals of the project. At least some of the following questions are likely to arise when the ELP is first introduced to teachers; all of them are relevant to the setting of project goals:

1. What is the relation between the ELP and the curriculum? In particular, are the communicative goals of the curriculum expressed in “can-do” terms? If not, will

it be easy or difficult to link the “I can” descriptors of the ELP checklists to specific curriculum objectives? The project will be greatly helped if preparation includes creating a document that translates curriculum objectives into an inventory of “can-do” tasks.

2. What is the relation between the ELP and the textbooks used to teach the different languages involved in the project? Are some or all of the textbooks designed with explicit reference to the CEFR proficiency levels? If they are not, how easy is it to associate the learning outcomes they aim for with the communicative tasks captured in the checklists? If textbooks are more strongly oriented to mastery of linguistic form than to the development of communicative skills, can the ELP serve as a communicative supplement? The curriculum document described in 1 might link its inventory of tasks to the content of the textbooks that are used in the different languages taught in the school.
3. How will the project seek to achieve the three pedagogical goals that underlie the ELP – learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and plurilingualism? In Chapter 2 we argued that any ELP implementation project implies a commitment to learner autonomy as a precondition for successful development of the intercultural and plurilingual dimensions. On the other hand, we have also argued that whole-school use of the ELP is necessary in order to do justice to these latter dimensions. Clearly, it is necessary to begin by introducing learners to the ELP and its ethos of self-assessment and reflection. But once that has been done, it should be easy enough to broaden the focus to include intercultural awareness and plurilingualism, especially when learners are using the ELP to support all their language learning. Whole-school activities of the kind described towards the end of 1.3 have an important role to play in promoting the development of plurilingual awareness and competences.
4. How will learners be introduced to the ELP? Will they be given the whole ELP at the beginning of the project, or will it be introduced section by section and built up gradually, perhaps starting with the dossier? The answer to this question may depend partly on the age of the learners in question and partly on the answers to questions 1-3. It is important to remember that the ELP is a complex document. If it is presented to learners all at once, they may very well find it difficult to understand and thus off-putting. Especially with younger learners, it seems wise to introduce different parts of the ELP over time, perhaps with the goal of ensuring that learners have assembled a complete ELP by the end of their first year of use. Needless to say, in a whole-school project, this approach demands careful co-ordination, but if it is well organised it can give great coherence to the whole-school dynamic of ELP use.
5. How exactly will the ELP be used? Once it has been introduced, will it be referred to in every lesson, or brought into focus perhaps once a week or once a fortnight? Also, will learners be given regular class time to work on their ELP, or will they be expected to keep it up to date in their own time, perhaps as a

regular homework activity? And how will whole-school use of the ELP be coordinated? Answers to these questions must take account of the fact that in most educational contexts the ELP represents a challenge to established practice. This means that it is unlikely to become integral to the teaching/learning process if it does not play a central role in the classroom. On the other hand, precisely because the ELP challenges established practice, many teachers may be tempted to leave its use to the initiative of the individual learner. There is a strong argument for occasionally creating shared timetable space across two or more languages so that learners can compare the different components of their developing plurilingual profile and explore its communicative potential.

6. How exactly will the self-assessment function of the ELP be operationalised? The ELP is designed to support a reflective learning dynamic in which self-assessment plays a central role. This fact alone implies that the answer to question 5 must be that class time is regularly devoted to the ELP, if only for purposes of self-assessment. If the project has established a clear relation between the ELP checklists on the one hand and curriculum goals and the textbook on the other, then it should be possible to use the checklists for self-assessment at the end of identifiable phases of learning. It is a mistake to assume that self-assessment is something that must be done by the individual learner in private. ELP-based self-assessment should be embedded in classroom interaction, supported by discussion of what the “I can” descriptors in question imply, and accompanied by some form of proof or demonstration. In other words, ELP-based self-assessment should entail a great deal more than ticking a box on a checklist. In a whole-school ELP project, every effort should be made to ensure that the practice of self-assessment is closely similar across languages. In the planning phase the project will also need to consider the relation between self-assessment and assessment by the teacher. (For a fuller discussion of ELP-based self-assessment and its broader implications, see Little 2009a.) At the end of 2.1.7 we briefly described the Austrian ELP funfair, which exploits the whole-school dimension of ELP use to allow learners who are new to self-assessment to benefit from the experience of learners who have been working with the ELP for several years.
7. According to the principles and guidelines, the ELP is the property of the learner, but how is this to be understood? It should not be interpreted to mean that the teacher has no role in mediating the ELP to his or her learners. On the other hand, learner ownership of the ELP is closely linked to the principle of learner autonomy: if learners are responsible for their learning, they are also responsible for keeping their ELP up to date, and teachers are entitled to check that they are doing so. What about ownership of the ELP as a physical object? In some countries pupils keep their books at school and take home only those they need for homework; while in other countries they keep their books at home and bring to school those they need for their classes. Either way, using the ELP in a whole-school project means that it cannot be associated with just one

language. Ideally, learners should themselves be responsible for their own ELP, keeping it safe and bringing it to all language classes. However, this may not be possible in the case of young learners, for whom it may be necessary to make alternative arrangements.

2.2.3 Always be ready to switch to Plan B

When the preliminary planning has been done, teachers have been introduced to the ELP, project goals have been identified, and an action plan has been drawn up, it is nevertheless wise to remain flexible in order to respond to sudden changes, as the examples of the Lithuanian and Icelandic ELP-WSU projects show.

Originally, the Lithuanian project intended to develop and pilot a primary ELP as part of the National Programme for Early Language Learning. When funding was withdrawn, LAKMA (the Lithuanian Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language) took on the project. This meant that it focused on the teaching/learning of English and did not include German and French, the other foreign languages taught at primary level in Lithuania. For this reason, the project referred to the PLP (Primary Language Portfolio) rather than the ELP. It nevertheless performed an important preliminary function, introducing participating teachers to portfolio methods and providing them with experience relevant to the design of a primary ELP in due course.

In Iceland the school that participated in ELP-WSU applied for funding to support its ELP project, but when planning was already well advanced, the application was turned down. At the same time, the school had no capacity to pay for the project itself by reducing participating teachers' workload or paying them a salary supplement. The close link between the ELP and Iceland's new curriculum nevertheless meant that it made sense to continue with the project, though it was necessary to find ways of making progress in small steps. In these changed circumstances, the principal goals of the Icelandic project became (i) to develop teachers' professional competence and improve the quality of teaching, and (ii) to enhance learners' responsibility and independence and increase their intercultural awareness.

3. Implementing whole-school ELP projects: some examples

We have already discussed various implementation possibilities in Chapters 1 and 2. Here we provide some examples of ways in which participants in ELP-WSU addressed the key pedagogical challenges of the ELP: learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and plurilingualism. More detail is provided in the project reports on the ELP-WSU website.

3.1 Learner autonomy

For the Hungarian project, learner autonomy meant the ability to manage one's own learning: to carry out learning tasks, whether individually or in collaboration with others; to formulate learning targets; to assess one's own progress; to recognise what works and what does not work; and to know where to find help when difficulties arise. The project set out to give learners the space to develop these skills, encouraging them to progress at their own speed and according to their own rhythm. The Russian project sought to develop learner autonomy by focusing on goal setting, learning strategies and self-assessment, and by developing learners' ability to find materials and activities relevant to their goals. The Romanian project had a rather narrower understanding of learner autonomy, introducing a variety of activities designed to enable learners to complete their ELPs on their own; while the Icelandic project focused in particular on self-assessment, peer assessment, other forms of alternative assessment, and reflection in learners' logbooks.

In the Lithuanian project, each participating teacher designed a task to raise her learners' awareness of the many different ways of learning languages and make them reflect on their own learning experience. For example, learners were asked whether or how often they used English outside the classroom and were encouraged to experiment with new ways of learning. The project also agreed that the statements/questions used for self-assessment should help pupils to identify their strengths ("I can ...") but also the areas that needed further work ("What do I need to improve? Why? How can I get better at it?"). Engaging with self-assessment in this way helped to develop learners' capacity for reflection and self-analysis. Some teachers made use of statements that focused on specific strategies for developing particular skills ("When I read, I also look at the pictures", "When I write, I check spelling in the dictionary").

In the Austrian project, the teachers helped their learners to become self-reliant by getting them to reflect on progress but also by involving them in planning, using the ELP's "I can" checklists and other parts of the language biography to discuss what they should focus on next. They helped them to understand the importance of self-assessment, providing frequent feedback on their use of the checklists; and they regularly devoted class time to the exploration of learning strategies and techniques. Importantly, at regular intervals class time was also given to wholly self-directed

learning and to reading books and watching DVDs for enjoyment. Working with the section of the language biography that focuses on planning individual learning, they decided what they wanted to do, asked for materials and/or advice, and after a few days presented, handed in or shared what they had done.

3.2 Intercultural awareness and plurilingualism

In the CEFR interculturality and plurilingualism are essentially inseparable:

The learner of a second or foreign language and culture does not cease to be competent in his or her mother tongue and the associated culture. Nor is the new competence kept entirely separate from the old. The learner does not simply acquire two distinct, unrelated ways of acting and communicating. The language learner becomes *plurilingual* and develops *interculturality*.

(Council of Europe 2001: 43; emphasis in original)

Accordingly, the CEFR's action-oriented approach describes behaviour that depends on cultural as well as communicative competence. In the ELP-WSU projects, plurilingualism and interculturality were sometimes treated separately and sometimes as two sides of the same coin.

The Austrian project sought to develop pupils' intercultural awareness by bringing them into contact with people from other cultural backgrounds and encouraging them to reflect on these encounters. Teachers also looked for content-related materials of intercultural significance that could be used in cross-curricular projects and encouraged their pupils to look for materials that gave an intercultural dimension to their interests. In a similar vein, teachers participating in the Icelandic project gave their students tasks that required them to explore the variety of cultures around the world – something they were further encouraged to do by the school's participation in exchange projects that involve interaction with schools in many countries, for example, China, Canada, France, Germany, Slovakia and Sweden. The Romanian project used French language assistants to establish cultural contacts, and the school also participated in various European projects and exchanges.

The Russian project addressed the plurilingual and intercultural dimensions in a number of ways. For example, it involved learners in global simulations that required them to use their proficiency in different L2s, and it encouraged them to communicate with native speakers of languages other than their own L1. It also considered the implications of the fact that common words have different connotations in different cultures and different associations for different groups of people: "*maison*", for instance, does not evoke the same visual image in an African as in a north European country, and it does not have the same meaning for a child as it does for an architect. In addition, the project used a lexical approach to identify similarities and contrasts

between the world views of different cultures, explored the cultural implications of lexical borrowing, and compared proverbs and gestures across languages.

The Hungarian and Lithuanian projects associated the intercultural dimension with plurilingualism. For example, each year the Jewish school that hosted the Hungarian project sends a group of 10th-grade students on a study visit to Israel. There they use English and Hebrew (and sometimes Hungarian) to engage with a culture to which they already belong. This stimulates them to seek further intercultural experiences, and many of them visit other countries and take part in international meetings organised for Jewish youth. In addition, foreign students and those with two home languages introduce a plurilingual and intercultural dimension to the daily life of the school. This is further enhanced in various ways: receiving foreign visitors, sharing food from different cultures, taking part in competitions that involve various Anglophone countries.

For the Lithuanian project, interculturality and plurilingualism were likewise inseparable, and the teachers designed tasks and a checklist of topics that combined the two dimensions. The topics included “Languages in my family/country”, “The words I know in other languages”, “The countries I have visited”, “My favourite athlete is ... S/he speaks ...”, “Countries, capitals, languages, flags”, and “Films, stories, songs”. Teachers found the topics useful when designing specific activities for their learners. It was possible to use the same topic in grades 2 and 4, but the format, scope and language of the task were likely to be different. (For further details, see the report on the Lithuanian project on the ELP-WSU website.)

Besides the plurilingualism that the teaching/learning of foreign languages is designed to cultivate, many school populations exhibit the “natural” plurilingualism that arises when pupils’ home language is not the language of schooling. In the Austrian project, teachers encouraged their students to include home languages other than German in their reading and writing activities. Students also shared basic vocabulary in all the languages spoken in their classroom; identified lexical and grammatical similarities and differences between the languages; used ELP checklists to reflect on their proficiency in all their languages; and gave brief presentations in their first + second + third (+ fourth) languages at morning assemblies and parents’ days. (Compare these activities with the suggestions at the end of 1.3.)

4. Evaluating whole-school ELP projects

4.1 Why evaluate?

The reasons for evaluating a whole-school ELP project are of two kinds. The first arises from the circumstances of the project's implementation. For example, if the project has been supported by external funding, the funding agency will probably require an evaluation in order to establish whether or not the project was successful and to identify results that may be relevant to the larger educational context. Evaluation of this kind may be carried out by one or more people external to the project itself, in which case it must be provided for financially at the planning stage. If the project has not been supported by external funding, it may nevertheless have been granted special status in the school; and in that case the school management may wish to receive a report that it can forward to local, regional or national authorities. This kind of evaluation will usually have to be undertaken by the project co-ordinator or project team.

The second kind of reason for evaluating whole-school ELP projects derives from the ethos in which the ELP itself is embedded. Traditional approaches to assessment in education have assumed a clear separation between teaching and learning on the one hand and assessment on the other. But the CEFR's action-oriented approach challenges this assumption. Each of its "can-do" descriptors can be used (i) to specify a curriculum goal, (ii) to guide the selection or creation of learning activities and materials, and (iii) as the basis for developing assessment tasks and rating criteria. The "can-do" approach thus encourages us to establish a dynamic interdependence between curriculum, pedagogy and assessment. What is more, because the action-oriented approach focuses in the first instance on communicative behaviour, its descriptors are no less accessible to learners than they are to curriculum developers, teachers and examiners. As we have insisted in earlier chapters, effective use of the ELP depends on reflective processes in which regular self-assessment plays a central role; and if self-assessment is shaped by the same criteria as formal assessment, it is at least arguable that its results should be included in the same reporting framework as examination results. Given that assessment is integral to the language education culture promoted by the CEFR and the ELP, it would be odd indeed if an ELP project did not also assign a central role to (self-)assessment in the sense of project evaluation.

None of the ELP-WSU projects was required to undergo external evaluation and the extent and formality of internal reporting varied considerably. But all projects engaged to a greater or lesser extent in formative evaluation, regularly reviewing progress in order to identify issues that needed to be addressed. For example, after a project meeting in February 2010, the co-ordinator of the Austrian project noted that the project was progressing satisfactorily. It had been well received by parents, and learners were contributing willingly in class and to some extent also in their free time. Moreover, the project was promoting interest in and respect for other languages and cultures in a predominantly monocultural environment. At the same time the project

team recognised that they needed to get pupils with home languages other than German to present their languages to others, to find more ways of making pupils and teachers aware of plurilingual repertoires, and to update the languages page of the school website more regularly.

4.2 What will evaluation focus on?

The focus of evaluation should be determined in the first instance by the project's stated aims. Thus ELP-WSU's Albanian project sought to track progress regarding the development of learner autonomy and gains in language learning, which were two of its principal goals; and the Romanian project had the same concerns, but was also interested in the development of co-operation among teachers. The focus of evaluation also depends on the use to which it will be put. The Austrian project needed to report to learners, parents and teachers of other subjects, as well as to the school administration; but it also used the results of its evaluation to plan the next year of the project. The Icelandic project too used its limited evaluation to guide further implementation of the ELP.

In the Lithuanian project, evaluation had two complementary focuses. The co-ordinator evaluated the project as a whole in order to prepare for its dissemination and to inform the organisation of similar projects in the future. The data for this level of evaluation were collected continuously so that the co-ordinator could respond immediately to the needs of project participants. At the same time, the participating teachers carried out their own evaluation with a view to improving teaching practice and learning outcomes and promoting portfolio learning in their schools, towns or regions. For this purpose, they collected data two or three times a year, at the end of each semester/trimester.

4.3 Varieties of data

Project evaluation depends on information: Who was involved in the project? What were its aims? How were those aims pursued? To what extent were they achieved? And so on. How this information is collected depends partly on the reason for undertaking the evaluation in the first place and partly on the size and status of the project. Efficient management should ensure that basic information about the project and its progress is available at all times. As a general rule, the larger the project and the more official its status, the more important it will be to establish formal procedures for collecting information. Questionnaires of various kinds are among the most cost-effective instruments available for this purpose (those used by the Hungarian, Greek, Lithuanian and Russian projects are available on the ELP-WSU website). Besides questionnaires, "can-do" checklists and other stimuli to reflection contained in the ELP itself can be used to gather information about individual learners and to identify trends among groups of learners.

When the information required for evaluation has been collected, it must be sorted, analysed and interpreted in order that conclusions may be drawn on the basis of appropriate criteria. The Albanian project collected information by (i) observing learners and looking for evidence of personal initiative, (ii) conducting interviews with learners, and (iii) analysing the contents of learners' dossiers. The evaluative criteria were: (i) the number of students using the ELP, (ii) the number of students choosing to learn second and third foreign languages, (iii) evidence of increased learner autonomy, and (iv) changes in teaching methods. In addition, the school principal, teachers and learners were required to complete a questionnaire from the ministry (responses were overwhelmingly positive). The evaluation of the Greek project, which was implemented nationwide, was based on questionnaires for teachers, semi-structured interviews with school principals, and observations by pedagogical advisers for foreign languages. By contrast, the evaluation of the Austrian project focused in particular on the learners and teachers involved. Was there a change in learners' motivation to learn languages and their attitudes towards other cultures? How far were they able to shape their own beliefs about opening up to other languages and cultures? Were there any changes in teachers' attitudes to and beliefs about language teaching and learning? In the Icelandic project, two teachers gathered data from their students about their attitude to the dossier, reflection and checklists. Although a few students were not enthusiastic, the majority acknowledged the advantages of these dimensions of portfolio learning. This coincided with the teachers' belief, based on observation, that they had a positive impact on learning.

The co-ordinator of the Lithuanian project elicited feedback from participating teachers by asking them to complete two questionnaires (available on the ELP-WSU website) and to write a final report. Teachers elicited feedback from pupils mainly via classroom observation and informal conversations. Some teachers asked pupils to write their opinions about portfolio tasks on the reverse of their worksheets; others had informal conversations with parents either individually or at parents' meetings. The co-ordinator also collected sample portfolio tasks and examples of students' work (available on the ELP-WSU website).

Knowing in advance that they would not be able to analyse data on a "scientific" basis, the members of the Austrian project used questionnaires to collect evidence-based feedback from learners, learners themselves wrote short reflections on using the ELP, and members of the project team wrote three short narratives that include their comments and conclusions (also available on the ELP-WSU website).

4.4 Gauging impact

Project evaluation is important for what it can tell us not only about the extent to which the aims of the project were achieved, but about the impact of the project on participants and stakeholders – in our case, teachers, learners and parents.

4.4.1 Teaching approaches

The ELP challenges traditional approaches to teaching by promoting learner autonomy and assigning a central role to self-assessment. As the co-ordinator of the Albanian project observed, there is no point in introducing the ELP unless you are prepared to make the pedagogical adjustments on which successful implementation depends. This implies that the ELP should support teacher as well as learner development, as the Romanian project confirmed.

Although the Icelandic project faced serious difficulties, it had a positive impact on participating teachers, partly because using the ELP involves ways of working that coincide with the requirements of the new Icelandic curriculum. Of the 14 teachers associated with the project, seven used self-assessment and 10 used reflection in their classes, while five used peer assessment and four had their students use a special logbook. The project provided all language teachers in the school with an opportunity to get some insight into the ELP and its use, and it prompted two teachers to implement the ELP in its entirety in the autumn of 2010. Interestingly, a teacher who had remained aloof from the ELP project told the co-ordination team that those of his students who had used logbooks and reflection in the previous semester with another teacher had made greater progress and were better organised than was usually the case.

Teachers participating in the Lithuanian project reported that it had made them more confident in setting targets, had led them to put more emphasis on skills and communicative functions (what pupils can do in English) rather than on structures, and had given them a better understanding of the national curriculum. They could see how learner self-assessment complements teacher assessment; were able to design better teaching and assessment tasks; involved students in discussing learning goals and learning strategies; had got to know their students better as regards their preferred ways of learning; and had gained a lot from collaborating with other teachers. Thus although it involved extra time and effort, participation in the project had been a positive experience. At the same time a lot of questions remained unanswered: How objective can learners be when they assess themselves? What role should the portfolio play in the system of assessment at primary level? How often should pupils work on portfolio tasks and how often should they update their portfolio? What is the “ideal” scope of portfolio tasks for grade 2 and grade 4? Where should portfolios be kept?

4.4.2 Learners

It was a common finding of ELP-WSU projects that the ELP had a positive impact on learners' motivation. In the Romanian project, pupils reacted favourably towards the language biography but on the whole preferred working with the dossier. In the Albanian project, self-assessment was found to be a powerful tool for motivating learners. The Icelandic project aimed to increase students' motivation and their confidence in language learning. They appeared to appreciate self-assessment and using a logbook and they liked having a portfolio in which to keep all their work. Their increasing familiarity with reflection, self-assessment and peer-assessment were expected to lead to a gradual increase in their autonomy and their intercultural and plurilingual awareness.

All pupils participating in the Lithuanian project said that they enjoyed portfolio activities (teachers were able to confirm this from their smiling faces and their body language). Some pupils particularly liked tasks that focused on intercultural awareness; while some were surprised to discover so many different ways of learning languages. Self-assessment made them proud of themselves and they showed their self-assessment sheets to their friends and family. One teacher reported that her pupils thought that portfolio tasks made a nice change from the textbook. Although students of lower ability needed more help from the teacher, they too were happy to complete portfolio tasks.

Pupils participating in the Greek project said that their learning was more successful when based on participation in role plays rather than on learning grammar. They recognised the need to talk in order to become clear about what has been learned, said that by reflecting one discovers how one learns most easily, and argued that self-assessment brings self-confidence.

The Austrian project surveyed participating learners, with the following results:

- Most learners engaged with their languages outside school (approximately 45% 1-2 times a week, 45% 2-4 times a week, and 6% rarely or never).
- All learners used learning tips and strategies (43% sometimes, 57% very often).
- Most learners set themselves goals (approximately 20% every 2-3 weeks, 40% every 6-8 weeks, 32% sometimes – some said that they never set themselves goals).
- Self-assessment was carried out regularly by the great majority of learners (7% 2-4 times a week, 32% 1-2 times a week, 50% always before tests, and 11% rarely or never).
- Most students informed themselves about their own and other cultures (3% more often than 4 times a week, 22% 2-4 times a week, 54% 1-2 times a week, and 25% rarely or never).
- All learners said that they used the ELP checklists only in lessons.

- All learners put their best work into the dossier (14% every week, 25% every 2-3 weeks, 20% every 6-8 weeks and, approximately, 20% sometimes – mostly in English only).
- All learners reflected on their progress (approximately 36% every week, 14% every 2-3 weeks and 45% sometimes).
- The great majority (89%) assessed themselves as making “good” or “very good” progress in learning English.

4.4.3 Parents

The Lithuanian project was the only one that reported on the impact of the ELP on pupils’ parents. Generally, parents were positive, though some had reservations about the extra work the project made for their children. Most parents said that the portfolio helped them to see the progress their children were making and to concentrate not on mistakes (something they usually saw in tests) but on the achievement evidenced by the dossier. Some said they were glad that their children enjoyed doing challenging and unusual tasks, though others declined to co-operate with the teacher in supporting portfolio work.

5. Conclusion: future prospects

As we noted in 1.5, not all ELP-WSU projects involved whole-school use of the ELP as envisaged in the project proposal. The reason for this is clear. Although 10 years have passed since the Council of Europe first launched the ELP, and in that time more than 100 ELPs from 70% of the member states have been validated, the ELP remains relatively untried in most national education systems. Reports from the ELP pilot projects (1998-2000) showed that the ELP was capable of making a positive impact on L2 learning (Schärer 2000): time and again learners said that they found it motivating to identify their own learning targets and assess their own progress. All of the ELP-WSU projects reported the same impact. So perhaps the first conclusion we should draw is that the ELP is no less relevant to the achievement of the Council of Europe's language education goals now than it was when it was first conceived in the 1980s, developed in embryo in the 1990s, brought to birth in the pilot projects, and sent out into the world in 2001.

Our second conclusion concerns the role that the ELP should play in achieving the goals of the Council of Europe's Languages in/for Education (LE) project, which was launched following the Third Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Warsaw in 2005. In the Summit Declaration, Europe's leaders committed themselves to ensuring that cultural diversity becomes a source of mutual enrichment, to protecting the rights of national minorities, and to securing the free movement of persons. The declaration includes the following paragraph:

We are determined to build cohesive societies by ensuring fair access to social rights, fighting exclusion and protecting vulnerable social groups. ... We are resolved to strengthen the cohesion of our societies in its social, educational, health and cultural dimensions.

The LE project has responded to this declaration by promoting the concept of plurilingual and intercultural education. According to this concept, language education should embrace all languages present in the school: the language of schooling as medium of teaching and learning and as a subject in its own right; modern foreign and classical languages; regional, minority and migrant languages (whether or not they are part of the curriculum). The project has produced a large number of documents that explore different dimensions of this concept, including the possible role of portfolio approaches (Fleming and Little 2010), but it has yet to develop practical tools. In the meantime, evidence from some of the ELP-WSU projects, especially the one carried out in Austria, suggests that the ELP in its present form can achieve some of the LE project's goals, especially when it comes to acknowledging and exploiting the home languages of learners from migrant backgrounds.

Our third and final conclusion concerns the enduring impact of ELP-WSU. According to the reports submitted by the project co-ordinators, ELP-WSU has helped to introduce or reinvigorate the ELP in the participating countries. For example, in Lithuania the project group discussed ways of continuing portfolio activities in 2010-11. Teachers who for

various reasons dropped out of the project declared an interest in resuming Primary Language Portfolio work with another group; while those who completed the first year of the project declared their intention of refining the portfolio tasks they had already designed, creating further tasks in order to produce a complete primary portfolio of their own, and involving other English and primary class teachers in portfolio work in order to develop a more coherent approach to evaluation.

The experience of the Norwegian ELP-WSU project prompted the project team to completely rethink how they implement the ELP in the future. Already pupils hand in most of their written work digitally via the school's Intranet, where a folder is assigned to each subject. The project team has worked out a way of implementing the ELP electronically, giving each pupil a digital dossier in which written texts, reflective notes and sound files can be stored, together with Internet links and other useful material. Teachers may still copy parts of the ELP for use in the classroom if they wish to do so, but paper portfolios will no longer be handed out to pupils. This kind of approach is likely to be more widely adopted across Council of Europe member states as schools make increasing use of digital technology. At the same time, it is important to note that paper ELPs have a number of advantages over electronic versions. For example, they are easier to carry about than even the most portable laptops; they are easier to browse than a website or a computer file; pages can be detached from different sections and juxtaposed; and paper ELPs are easier to share with other learners

The co-ordinator of the Romanian project reported that at the end of the school year 2009-10 all language teachers in the school considered that the ELP was an essential language learning tool. Following a presentation she made of her project to teachers of French in the network of bilingual schools, the Romanian Ministry of Education recommended that the ELP should be used in all schools in the network. She hopes that in due course it will be possible to promote use of the ELP beyond the bilingual network.

More examples of forward-looking comments can be found in the project reports on the ELP-WSU website. Here we give the final word to the co-ordinator of the Austrian project, also a member of the ELP-WSU project team:

I find it easy to integrate the ELP into my teaching. The start in Year 5 is a bit time consuming, but the reward is learners' growing competence in reflection and planning and their general motivation to make progress. Their interest in other cultures is aroused, and learners with a migration background are listened to with respect. At the end of our ELP-WSU project year, these are my conclusions:

- If learners use the ELP in all language classes but also for intercultural reflection in other subjects, they have a good instrument to reflect, understand, plan and improve their learning. The "philosophy" of the ELP is easier to convey to learners, it's easier for learners to see convergence in their learning of different languages.
- For learners who are introduced to the ELP in their English class (English is the foreign language that is taught earliest in the Austrian curriculum except for learners whose first language is not German) it is no problem to apply the ELP to

other languages. On the contrary, this is a logical further step and makes learners aware of their developing plurilingual competence.

- When the ELP is used by all learners at a school, language learning and teaching are necessarily based on the CEFR. Teaching and learning English aims to reach the national “Bildungsstandards” in Year 8. These are “located” on A2 and B1 of the Self-Assessment Grid. Thus, integrating the ELP into teaching helps teachers to plan their teaching along the lines required by the national Austrian curriculum.
- Using the ELP helps learners to organise their language learning autonomously. For this it is highly desirable for learners (and teachers) that materials are available which provide tasks for all language competences according to CEFR levels.
- Reflecting on intercultural experiences helps learners and teachers of all subjects to become aware – even in remote rural areas – that we are living in a society where learning about otherness in a respectful and considerate way is essential for beneficial development.

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The European Language Portfolio

A guide to the planning, implementation and evaluation of whole-school projects

David Little

This publication is aimed at:

- teachers;
- teacher educators;
- decision-makers: school principals, inspectors, advisers, ministry officials.

The European Language Portfolio aims to foster the development of learner autonomy, intercultural awareness and plurilingualism. Teachers of particular languages working on their own can use the ELP to promote learner autonomy, but the goals of intercultural awareness and plurilingualism invite us to use the ELP in all foreign language classes at all levels in the school.

The guide introduces the language education policy that underpins the ELP, explores the key concepts that it embodies, and explains how to plan, implement and evaluate whole-school ELP projects. The ten case studies published on the project website illustrate various dimensions of ELP use and include practical suggestions and activities for teachers and learners.

For further information and materials relating to this publication, visit the website:
<http://elp-wsu.ecml.at>.

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